Northwest Territories

Addiction Survey

Northwest Territories Health and Social Services

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Preface

The NWT Addiction Survey was made possible by the support and financial contribution provided by Health Canada.

Executive Summary

Before public health problems such as heavy alcohol consumption and illicit drug use can be addressed it is important to know how big the problem is and whom it affects. The aim of this report is to present findings from the *2004 Northwest Territories Addiction Survey*. This survey represents an important part of ongoing efforts to monitor alcohol and drug use in the territory. Below is a list of key findings in the report.

Key Findings

Alcohol Use

- An estimated 77.9% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older drank some alcohol in the year preceding the survey.
- Approximately 19.7% of current drinkers normally drink alcohol once a week, 14% drink two to three times a week, 6.1% four or more times a week, while 35% indicated they drink one to three times a month, and 25.2% less than once a month.
- The consumption of five or more drinks on one occasion is considered a fairly reliable indicator of heavy or binge drinking. An estimated 46.4% of current drinkers or 36% of the total NWT population 15 years of age and older indicated they consumed five or more drinkers on one occasion at least once a month in the year prior to the survey.
- Heavy drinking was more prevalent for NWT residents than residents of any Canadian province. In the NWT, regular heavy drinking was more common among males, younger residents, individuals with lower levels of education and those living in low-income households.
- Approximately 32% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older - 41.3% of current drinkers - had engaged in high-risk alcohol use in the year prior to the survey. The prevalence of hazardous drinking in the NWT was about two times higher than in the provinces.
- In the NWT, males were more likely than females, younger residents were more likely than older residents, individuals with less than secondary education were more likely than those with more education, and those living in low income households were more likely than those living in higher income households, to engage in hazardous drinking,

Cannabis Use

- An estimated 20.7% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older indicated they had used cannabis at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey. The prevalence of past-year cannabis use was higher in the NWT than in any province.
- Males were more likely than females to have used cannabis in the previous year (25.5% vs. 15.4%). Nearly half of youth and young adults (46.3%) between 15 and 24 years of age used cannabis in the year preceding the survey, significantly higher than older residents.
- An estimated eight percent of the total population 15 years of age and older reported using cannabis at least once a week in the year preceding the survey.

Use of Other Illicit Drugs

- An estimated 2.7% of residents 15 years of age and older reported using at least one of the following five drugs in the year preceding the survey: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy or heroin. This was similar to the prevalence noted in other provinces. Meanwhile, 1.8% reported using cocaine or crack in the previous year.
- The above estimates should be treated with caution due to high sampling variability. Moreover, people may be unwilling to report using cocaine or heroin and individuals addicted to these types of illicit drugs may be less likely to participate or be sampled in this type of survey.

Alcohol and Drug-related Harms

- An estimated 22% of current drinkers indicated they had experienced at least one of a number of listed harmful consequences due to their drinking in the past year. This was significantly higher than the prevalence for residents in any Canadian province. Negative consequences on friendships or social life, physical health, and home life or marriage were the most common types noted.
- Younger residents were more likely than older residents, and residents with lower levels of education were more likely than those with higher levels to report at least one alcohol-related problem due to their own drinking in the past year.
- An estimated 55.9% of the NWT population 15 years of age and older experienced at least one form of harm due to other people's drinking in the year prior to the survey; significantly higher than any province.
- About one in three residents had been insulted or humiliated by someone who had been drinking, had serious arguments as a result of someone else's drinking, or had been pushed or shoved by someone who had been drinking.
- The likelihood of experiencing at least one adverse experience due to other people's drinking was higher for males than females, higher for those 15 to 14 years of age than other age groups, higher for those with lower levels of education than those with higher levels, and higher for heavy drinkers than for light or non-drinkers.
- An estimated 39.2% of current users of any of the following eight drugs: cannabis, cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants or steroids, reported at least one harm from their own drug use in the year preceding the survey. This proportion was significantly higher than the prevalence reported in the provinces.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 1

2. Methodology 2

3. Alcohol Use 5

4. Cannabis Use 14

5. Use of Other Illicit Drugs 18

6. Alcohol and Drug-related Problems 21

7. Comparisons with other Provinces 26

8. Concluding Remarks 29

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Final Results for Initial Sample, by Approach and Strata, NWT Addictions Survey, 2004 2

Table 3.1.1 Drinking Stratus by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004 5

Table 3.1.2 Adjusted Odds Ratios for Current Drinkers by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004 6

Table 3.2.1 Drinking Frequency Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 7

Table 3.2.2 Prevalence Drinking Once a Week or More by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004 8

Table 3.3.1 Usual Number of Drinks Consumed on Days When Drinking Takes Place by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004 9

Table 3.4.1 Heavy Drinking at Least Once per Month Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 10

Table 3.4.2 Heavy Drinking at Least Once per Week by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 11

Table 3.5.1 Type of Drinker by Sex, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 12

Table 3.6.1 Hazardous Drinking (AUDIT 8+) Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 13

Table 4.1.1 Used Cannabis During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 14

Table 4.2.1 Used Cannabis Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 15

Table 4.2.2 Frequency of Cannabis Use Past Three Months, Population Age 15+ and Past-year Users Age 15+, NWT 2004 16

Table 5.1.1 Lifetime Use of Listed Illicit Drugs by Sex and Age Groups, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 17

Table 5.1.2 Used Any of Five Illicit Drugs During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 18

Table 5.1.3 Used Any of Six Illicit Drugs During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 19

Table 5.2.1 Used Drugs Past Year by Type of Drug, Population 15+, NWT 2004 20

Table 5.2.2 Used Any of Six Illicit Drugs Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 20

Table 6.1.1 Reported Self-harm From Alcohol Use by Type of Harm, Lifetime and Past-year, Lifetime & Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 21

Table 6.1.2 At Least One Harm Past Year From Own Drinking by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15+, NWT 2004 22

Table 6.2.1 Reported Harm From Other People's Alcohol Use Past Year by Type of Harm, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 23

Table 6.2.2 At Least One Harm Past Year From Other People's Drinking by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004 24

Table 6.3.1 Reported Self-harm from Drug Use Past Year by Type of Harm, Current Drug Users Age 15+, NWT 2004 25

Table 7.1.1 Prevalence of Alcohol & Other Drug Use Past Year by NWT and Selected Provinces, Population Age 15+, 2004 26

Table 7.1.2 Type of Drinker and Population Reporting AUDIT 8+ Score by NWT & Selected Provinces, Population Age 15+, 2004 27

Table 7.2.1 At Least One Harm Past Year From Own Drinking and Drug Use, and From Others' Drinking by NWT & Selected Provinces, Population Age 15+, 2004 28

1 Introduction

Early in 2004, Health Canada and the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions collaborated to conduct the Canadian Addiction Survey (CAS). Key objectives of the CAS included the following: (1) determine the prevalence and patterns of alcohol and drug us in Canada; (2) measure the extent of harms associated with the use of alcohol and drugs; (3) identify risk factors related to the use of drugs and alcohol; (4) provide baseline data for future evaluations of the Canada Drug Strategy. Individuals age 15 years and older living in Canada's ten provinces were included in the survey while residents of the three northern territories were excluded. To address this gap, Health Canada designated additional funds to conduct similar surveys in the three territories.

In August 2004, an agreement was reached between Health Canada and the Goverr.ment of the Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services to carry out the NWT Addiction Survey. In turn, the Department of Health and Social Services contracted the NWT Bureau of Statistics to carry out the survey and provide data files to Health Canada and NWT Health & Social Services. The NWT Addiction Survey represents an important part of ongoing efforts to monitor alcohol and drug use in the territory and Canada as a whole. This report presents initial findings from the survey. Other findings and analysis may be contained in future reports.

Organization of the Report

The report is divided into seven chapters. The first presents an overview of the survey design and other methodological issues, the next three chapters present information about the prevalence and patterns of alcohol and drug use in the territory for different population subgroups, chapter six looks at alcohol and drug-related problems, and chapter seven provides a number of comparisons between the NWT results with provincial results obtained from the CAS.

2 Methodology

The target population for the 2004 NWT Addiction Survey was all persons 15 years of age and older living in the Northwest Territories with the exception of full-time residents of institutions. The following chapter provides a brief description of the methodology used to carry out the survey.

2.1 Survey Questionnaire

The NWT survey questionnaire is based on core content taken from the Canadian Addiction Survey questionnaire identified by Health Canada. Questions in the two surveys are the same with two notable exceptions. In the Canadian survey men were asked how often they consumed five or more drinks on one occasion while women were asked how often they consumed four or more drinks on one occasion. Meanwhile, in the NWT survey both men and women were asked how often they consumed five or more drinks on one occasion. In the other instance, several categories for the question regarding frequency of drinking in the past 12 months did not match in both surveys. As a result, NWT estimates for heavy and for hazardous drinking using the AUDIT scale may be more conservative than those reported for the Canadian Addiction Survey.

2.2 Sample Design

The *2004 NWT Addiction Survey* was based on a probability proportional to size stratified multistage sampling design. All NWT communities were divided into the following seven strata: Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith, Inuvik, Norman Wells, 11 communities in the northern part of the territory, and 16 communities in the southern portion. The sample size for each stratum was based on the stratum's population size relative to the total territorial population. The first five strata entered the sample with certainty, while five communities were randomly selected in each of the last two strata. Households in Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik were selected at random using random digit dialing. Households in the other strata were randomly selected using a dwelling listing maintained by the NWT Bureau of Statistics. Within households, one respondent 15 years of age or older was randomly selected according to the next birthday for household members. Interviews were conducted by telephone in households selected using random digit dialing, and face-to-face interviews were conducted in the other selected households.

2.3 Sample Size & Response Rates

A total of 845 NWT residents completed the survey. The overall response rate was 74.3%. The response rates were relatively consistent across planned survey strata ranging from a low of 67.7% in Inuvik to a high of 82.1% in the small communities in the northern part of the NWT (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1
Final Results for Initial Sample, by Approach and Strata, NWT Addictions Survey, 2004

	All Households	Completed	Refusal	Unable to Contact	Response Rate
All Operations	1,137	845	171	121	74.3%
Phone Operations	804	584	152	68	72.6%
Inuvik	105	71	24	41	67.6%
Fort Smith	72	50	22	-	69.4%
Hay River	99	78	17	4	78.8%
Yellowknife	528	385	89	54	72.9%
Face-to-face Operations	333	261	19	53	78.4%
Norman Wells	20	14	2	4	70.0%
Other Northern Communities	123	101	9	13	82.1%
Other Southern Communities	190	146	8	36	76.8%

2.4 Data Collection and Editing

For the telephone portion of the survey, interviewers were hired and worked in the Bureau of Statistics office in Yellowknife. Interviewers traveled to each of the selected communities for the face-to-face portion of the survey. Data collection began mid October 2004 and ended mid December 2004.

As interviewers returned completed questionnaires to the Bureau of Statistics, each questionnaire was reviewed. Corrections and edits were made at this time. In some cases, respondents were re-contacted for clarification of survey responses. Data entry was completed directly from questionnaires on a database developed by the Bureau of Statistics. Following data entry, computer-assisted edits were performed to check for data entry errors and logical inconsistencies among responses.

2.5 Weighting

The idea behind estimation in a probability sample is that each person in the sample "represents", besides himself or herself, a number of other persons in the population not in the sample. In this way inferences about the total population can be made based on the sample. Following initial weighting, post-stratification weighting by strata sex, specific age category and aboriginal identity was carried out using population estimates produced by the NWT Bureau of Statistics.

2.6 Partial Non-response

Partial non-response occurs when the respondent did not answer a question, or could not recall the requested information. Partial non-response can either be included or excluded when presenting survey results. In this report, partial non-responses were excluded when estimates were calculated. By excluding those that did not state an answer assumptions are made about what those people would have stated as an answer (i.e., their responses would have been distributed in the same way as those for people providing an answer). Partial non-response rates varied between estimates from a low of 0% for drinking status, 1.2% for heavy monthly drinking, 3.7% for hazardous drinking (AUDIT 8+), and a high of 14.8% for lifetime harmful effects of drug use.

The high partial non-response rate for the last estimate highlights a potential snag when moving from a computer assisted interviewing method to a paper & pencil questionnaire. Interviewers can easily follow complex skip patterns that identify the target population for particular questions when programmed in a computer environment. The same skip patterns are sometimes more difficult to follow when using a paper and pencil questionnaire. In this case a number of respondents who had tried cannabis during their lifetime, but had not tried other drugs were not asked questions about the consequences of their drug use because the interviewer missed the appropriate instructions.

2.7 Measuring Sampling Error & Reliability

Because results obtained from sample surveys are always subject to some uncertainty, an indication of the magnitude of this sampling error is helpful. Where the survey is based on probability sampling it is possible to estimate the size of sampling errors by calculating the standard errors of the estimates derived from the survey results.

In this report, the standard errors were calculated using a formula assuming simple random sampling. As outlined above in the sample design section, this is not technically correct. The NWT Addiction Survey utilized a more complex sample design with stratification and multiple stages of selection that would in turn affect the estimation of standard errors. In general, stratification and sampling proportional to population size can reduce the variability associated with standard errors particularly if the estimates are relatively homogenous within strata. Previous NWT surveys have shown that drinking patterns are correlated with community of residence.[1] On the other hand, cluster sampling tends to increase the variability

1 NWT Bureau of Statistics. 2003. 2002 NWT Alcohol & Drug Survey: Statistical Summary Report. http://www.stats.gov.nt.ca/Statinfo/Health/alcdrug/2002%20Alcohol%26Drug/_2002Alcohol%26Drug.html.

of estimates compared to simple random sampling. Analysis of variance calculations obtained using Epi Info software based on the Taylor Linearized Deviation approach suggest that almost all territorial level estimates found in this report had a design effect less than one.[2] As a result, it is assumed the simple binomial formula will not underestimate variance estimates due to sampling design and this method provides a good approximation for the computation of standard errors.

The standard error is used to calculate the coefficient of variation (the ratio of the standard error to the estimate presented as a percentage). The coefficient of variation (CV) provides an indication of how reliably an estimate obtained from the sample can be expected to represent the true population value. According to Statistics Canada's data quality guidelines, an estimate with a CV less than 16.5% is acceptable. Those with a CV between 16.5% and 33.3% are marginal and should be flagged to caution users about the high levels of sampling error associated with the estimate. Estimates with a CV above 33.3% should not be published. This report adheres to these guidelines.

2.8 Statistical Testing

All estimates provided in this report include 95% confidence intervals. Confidence intervals not only provide a means of assessing and reporting the precision of an estimate - wide intervals tend to indicate imprecise estimates - they can also be used as a conservative approximation to a statistical test. If 95% confidence intervals around two estimates do not overlap, a comparable statistical test would always indicate a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level. However, in some cases an appropriate statistical test would indicate a statistically significant difference even though the confidence intervals do slightly overlap.[3] Logistic regression was carried out using SPSS software.

2.9 Key Independent Variables

The following independent variables are used throughout the report.

Measure	Categories
Sex	Male; Female
Age	The age groups reflect categories used to weight the survey results to NWT population estimates: 15 - 24; 25 - 39; 40 - 59; 60 +
Highest Level of Schooling	Less than secondary - grade 11 or less; completed secondary - high school diploma; Some post-secondary - trades certificate or diploma, or college certificate or diploma; University degree
Income Levels	Income categories are based on a combination of household income and number of persons in the household. The low-income category is loosely based on Statistics Canada's low-income cutoffs before taxes for the year 2003 and low-income measures before taxes for the year 2002. The high-income category reflects the higher average income in the Northwest Territories compared to Canada as a whole. Low income - Less than $20,000, or $20,000 - $39,999 with 3 or more household members, or $40,000 - $59,999 with 7 or more household members High Income - $80,000 - $99,999 with 1 or 2 household members, or $100,000 or more Not Stated - did not report household income Middle Income - All others

2 At 1.1, just one estimate, drinking status, had a design effect greater than one.

3 As a general rule of thumb for this particular survey, if the proportions are between 15% and 24% and the confidence intervals overlap less than 2% or if the proportions are greater than 25% and the confidence intervals overlap less than 3% it is highly likely that the difference is statistically significant with a p value less than 0.05.

3 Alcohol Use

This chapter reports on six measures of alcohol use: drinking status, frequency of drinking, amount usually consumed, frequency of heavy drinking, type of drinker and a measure of high-risk drinking.

3.1 Current Drinkers

Approximately 25,200 Northwest Territories (NWT) residents 15 years of age and older, or 77.9% of the population in this age group indicated they drank some alcohol in the year preceding the survey. Meanwhile, 16.7% were former drinkers and 5.4% had never consumed alcohol (see table 3.1.1). Males were more likely than females to be current drinkers (81% vs. 74.6%). The prevalence of drinking in the previous year was highest among residents between 15 and 39 years of age (83.7%) and lowest among those 60 years and older (56.9%). Former drinkers were more likely to be in the older age groups.

Table 3.1.1
Drinking Status by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Lifetime abstainers (%)	95% CI (%)	Former drinker (%)	95% CI (%)	Current drinker (%)	95% CI (%)
Total	32,389	5.4	(3.8 - 6.9)	16.7	(14.2 - 19.2)	77.9	(75.1 - 80.7)
Male	16,841	4.6[E]	(2.5 - 6.7)	14.4	(10.9 - 18.0)	81.0	(77.0 - 84.9)
Female	15,548	6.2[E]	(4.0 - 8.4)	19.2	(15.6 - 22.8)	74.6	(70.6 - 78.5)
Age Group							
15 - 24	6,979	12.8[E]	(6.2 - 19.4)	F	--	82.9	(75.5 - 90.3)
25 - 39	10,918	F	--	15.9	(11.7 - 20.2)	83.7	(79.4 - 88.0)
40 - 59	11,306	3.7[E]	(1.7 - 5.6)	21.5	(17.3 - 25.7)	74.9	(70.4 - 79.3)
60 +	2,994	12.6[E]	(5.9 - 19.4)	30.5	(21.1 - 39.8)	56.9	(46.8 - 67.0)
Highest Level of Schooling							
Less than secondary	11,515	8.3[E]	(5.0 - 11.5)	23.3	(18.3 - 28.3)	68.4	(62.9 - 73.9)
Completed secondary	6,473	7.0[E]	(3.0 - 11.0)	14.5[E]	(9.0 - 20.0)	78.5	(72.1 - 84.9)
Some post-secondary	7,121	F	--	12.7[E]	(8.0 - 17.3)	84.7	(79.7 - 89.7)
University degree	7,233	F	--	12.4[E]	(7.9 - 16.8)	85.9	(81.2 - 90.7)
Household Income							
Low	4,993	F	--	25.8	(18.4 - 33.3)	68.1	(60.2 - 76.0)
Middle	10,712	F	--	18.2	(13.9 - 22.5)	78.9	(74.3 - 83.5)
High	9,872	F	--	11.2[E]	(7.3 - 15.0)	86.9	(82.8 - 91.0)
Not Stated	6,812	13.6[E]	(8.0 - 19.1)	15.8[E]	(9.9 - 21.7)	70.6	(63.3 - 78.0)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

Table 3.1.2
Adjusted Odds Ratios for Current Drinkers by Selected Characteristics, Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Male	1.42 *	(1.01 - 2.00)
Female †	1.00	...
Age Group		
15 - 24	4.15 *	(2.23 - 7.72)
25 - 39	2.99 *	(1.69 - 5.30)
40 - 59	1.53	(0.87 - 2.65)
60 + †	1.00	...
Highest Level of Schooling		
Less than secondary †	1.00	...
Completed secondary	1.33	(0.82 - 2.17)
Some post-secondary	2.15 *	(1.27 - 3.65)
University degree	2.12 *	(1.20 - 3.74)
Household Income		
Low †	1.00	...
Middle	1.34	(0.79 - 2.28)
High	2.10 *	(1.11 - 3.95)
Not Stated	0.87	(0.51 - 1.49)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).

Individuals with less than a high school diploma were less likely than those with higher levels of education to indicate they drank alcohol in the previous year. An estimated 85.9% of residents with a university degree were considered current drinkers compared to 68.4% of those with less than secondary education. Individuals living in households with lower income were less likely than those living in households with middle or high income to report drinking alcohol in the past year (68.1% compared to 78.9% and 86.9% respectively). However, income is associated with level of education and age, when these factors along with gender were taken into account, the odds that someone living in a middle income household drank in the past year were not significantly different from the odds of someone living in a low income household (see table 3.1.2).

3.2 Frequency of Drinking - Current Drinkers

Current drinkers were asked how often they drink alcoholic beverages. Of the 78% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older who indicated they drank alcohol in the previous year, 19.7% said they normally drink once a week, 14% indicated they drink two to three times a week, 6.1% drink four or more times a week, while 35% said they drink one to three times a month, and 25.2% less than once a month.

Table 3.2.1 shows the proportion of current drinkers who indicated they drink more than once a week, once a week, one to three times a month, and less than once a month for various population subgroups. Males were more likely than females to indicate they drank more than once a week (28% vs. 11%) while females were more likely than males to drink less than once a month (33.1% vs. 18.5%).

Frequency of drinking was similar for residents between 15 and 24 years of age and those between 25 and 39 years of age. However, individuals between 40 and 59 were more likely than those between 25 and 39 to indicate they drank more than once a week (25.7% vs. 18.3%), but less likely to drink once a week (17.2% vs. 24.4%).

Frequent consumption of alcohol increased with education levels. Individuals with a university degree were more likely than those with a high school diploma or those with less than secondary level of schooling to report drinking more than once a week (26.8% compared to 16.2% and 15.1%). Those living in high-income households were also more likely than those living in middle-income households to report drinking more than once a week (28.1% vs. 16.7%). Meanwhile, individuals living in low and middle income households were more likely than those living in high-income households to indicate they consumed alcohol one to three times a month (see table 3.2.1).

Table 3.2.1
Drinking Frequency Past Year by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers	More than once a week (%)	95% CI (%)	Once a week (%)	95% CI (%)	1 - 3 time a month (%)	95% CI (%)	less than once a month (%)	95% CI (%)
Total	25,235	20.1	(17.1 - 23.2)	19.7	(16.6 - 22.7)	35.0	(31.3 - 38.7)	25.2	(21.9 - 28.5)
Male	13,641	28.0	(22.9 - 33.0)	22.3	(17.6 - 26.9)	31.3	(26.1 - 36.5)	18.5	(14.1 - 22.9)
Female	11,594	11.0	(7.7 - 14.2)	16.6	(12.7 - 20.5)	39.4	(34.2 - 44.5)	33.1	(28.1 - 38.0)
Age Group									
15 - 24	5,785	18.1[E]	(9.7 - 26.5)	17.0[E]	(8.8 - 25.2)	40.3	(29.6 - 50.9)	24.6[E]	(15.3 - 34.0)
25 - 39	9,137	18.3	(13.4 - 23.2)	24.4	(18.9 - 29.8)	37.9	(31.7 - 44.1)	19.4	(14.3 - 24.4)
40 - 59	8,464	25.7	(20.5 - 30.8)	17.2	(12.7 - 21.7)	26.5	(21.3 - 31.7)	30.6	(25.2 - 36.0)
60 +	1,704	F	--	16.8[E]	(6.5 - 27.0)	39.8[E]	(26.4 - 53.3)	32.9[E]	(20.0 - 45.8)
Highest Level of Schooling									
Less than secondary	7,877	15.1[E]	(9.8 - 20.5)	14.8[E]	(9.5 - 20.1)	45.4	(38.0 - 52.8)	24.6	(18.2 - 31.0)
Completed secondary	5,079	16.2[E]	(9.7 - 22.6)	25.2	(17.6 - 32.9)	35.4	(26.9 - 43.8)	23.3	(15.8 - 30.7)
Some post-secondary	6,029	23.2	(16.8 - 29.6)	19.0	(13.0 - 24.9)	24.5	(18.0 - 31.0)	33.3	(26.2 - 40.5)
University degree	6,215	26.8	(20.3 - 33.2)	22.0	(15.9 - 28.0)	31.5	(24.7 - 38.3)	19.8	(14.0 - 25.6)
Household Income									
Low	3,326	F	--	17.0[E]	(8.9 - 25.1)	44.0	(33.3 - 54.7)	28.2[E]	(18.5 - 37.8)
Middle	8,520	16.7	(12.0 - 21.5)	20.5	(15.4 - 25.6)	38.7	(32.5 - 44.8)	24.0	(18.7 - 29.4)
High	8,577	28.1	(22.2 - 34.1)	21.3	(15.9 - 26.8)	28.6	(22.7 - 34.6)	21.9	(16.4 - 27.4)
Not stated	4,810	19.1[E]	(11.5 - 26.7)	16.8[E]	(9.5 - 24.0)	33.3	(24.2 - 42.4)	30.8	(21.9 - 39.7)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret wit caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

Table 3.2.2 provides the adjusted odd ratio for the proportion of residents who indicated they drank at least once a week. When age, education levels and income levels were taken into account, the odds that males would drink alcohol this often was nearly three times higher than for females. When all other factors presented in the table were taken into account, the odds that residents living in high income households would report drinking at least once a week was 1.8 times those for residents living in low income households.

Table 3.2.2
Prevalence of Drinking Once a Week or More by Select Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers	Once a week or more (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	25,235	39.8	(36.0 - 43.6)		
Male	13,641	50.2	(44.6 - 55.9)	2.75 *	(1.96 - 3.86)
Female †	11,594	27.6	(22.9 - 32.3)	1.00	...
Age Group					
15 - 24	5,785	35.1	(24.7 - 45.5)	1.64	(0.75 - 3.59)
25 - 39	9,137	42.7	(36.4 - 49.0)	1.93	(0.92 - 4.07)
40 - 59	8,464	42.9	(37.0 - 48.7)	1.82	(0.85 - 3.87)
60 + †	1,704	27.3[E]	(15.1 - 39.5)	1.00	...
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	7,877	29.9	(23.1 - 36.8)	1.00	...
Completed secondary	5,079	41.4	(32.7 - 50.1)	1.43	(0.85 - 2.40)
Some post-secondary	6,029	42.2	(34.7 - 49.7)	1.24	(0.80 - 2.25)
University degree	6,215	48.8	(41.5 - 56.1)	1.79 *	(1.03 - 3.10)
Household Income					
Low †	3,326	26.4[E]	(16.9 - 35.9)	1.00	...
Middle	8,520	37.3	(31.2 - 43.4)	1.21	(0.64 - 2.29)
High	8,577	49.4	(42.8 - 56.1)	1.74	(0.88 - 3.44)
Not Stated	4,810	35.9	(26.6 - 45.1)	1.24	(0.64 - 2.41)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

3.3 Amount of Alcohol Normally Consumed per Occasion

Current drinkers were also asked how many drinks they usually had on those days they drank alcohol. An estimated 40.9% tend to drink in moderation, indicating they typically have one to two drinks on the days they consume alcohol. Women were more likely than men to drink moderately (47.1% vs. 35.5%). Moderate drinking also tended to increase with age and with education levels (see table 3.3.1).

An estimated 40% of current drinkers - 31.1% of the total population - 15 years of age and older indicated they normally consume five of more drinks on a typical drinking day. This means that over 10,000 NWT residents in this age group normally put themselves at an increased risk of alcohol-related problems when they drink. Male current drinkers were more likely than female current drinkers to typically engage in this type of drinking (48.7% vs. 29.9%). Heavy drinking was also more common among younger current drinkers, those with lower levels of education and those living in low-income households.

Table 3.3.1
Usual Number of Drinks Consumed on Days When Drinking Takes Place, by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers	1-2 drinks (%)	95% CI (%)	3-4 drinks (%)	95% CI (%)	5+ drinks (%)	95% CI (%)
Total	25,235	40.9	(37.1 - 44.7)	19.1	(16.0 - 22.1)	40.0	(36.2 - 43.8)
Male	13,641	35.5	(30.1 - 41.0)	15.7	(11.6 - 19.9)	48.7	(43.0 - 54.4)
Female	11,594	47.1	(41.8 - 52.4)	23.0	(18.5 - 27.5)	29.9	(25.0 - 34.8)
Age Group							
15 - 24	5,785	20.5[E]	(11.6 - 29.4)	27.6[E]	(17.7 - 37.4)	51.9	(40.9 - 62.9)
25 - 39	9,137	40.6	(34.4 - 46.9)	12.0[E]	(7.8 - 16.2)	47.4	(41.0 - 53.8)
40 - 59	8,464	50.8	(44.8 - 56.7)	21.8	(16.9 - 26.7)	27.4	(22.1 - 32.7)
60 +	1,704	62.8	(49.1 - 76.5)	16.3[E]	(5.9 - 26.8)	20.9[E]	(9.4 - 32.4)
Highest Level of Schooling							
Less than secondary	7,877	20.0	(14.0 - 26.0)	20.7	(14.6 - 26.8)	59.3	(51.9 - 66.7)
Completed secondary	5,079	33.9	(25.5 - 42.4)	20.5[E]	(13.3 - 27.7)	45.5	(36.6 - 54.4)
Some post-secondary	6,029	52.5	(44.8 - 60.1)	16.4[E]	(10.8 - 22.1)	31.1	(24.0 - 38.2)
University degree	6,215	61.0	(53.9 - 68.2)	18.6	(12.9 - 24.2)	20.4	(14.5 - 26.3)
Household Income							
Low	3,326	11.7[E]	(4.5 - 18.8)	28.4[E]	(18.4 - 38.4)	60.0	(49.1 - 70.8)
Middle	8,520	37.7	(31.6 - 43.9)	18.9	(13.9 - 23.9)	43.4	(37.1 - 49.7)
High	8,577	53.6	(47.0 - 60.2)	16.5	(11.6 - 21.5)	29.9	(23.8 - 36.0)
Not stated	4,810	42.4	(32.7 - 52.0)	18.0[E]	(10.5 - 25.5)	39.6	(30.1 - 49.2)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

3.4 Heavy Drinking

While the health impact of moderate drinking continues to be debated, there is little doubt that regular heavy drinking contributes to a large number of negative health outcomes. High blood alcohol concentration is a major risk factor in a large proportion of injury deaths in the territory.[4] Long-term regular heavy alcohol use can lead to a large number of physical and mental health problems including cirrhosis of the liver, diseases of the circulatory system, and depression. Moreover, regular heavy alcohol consumption is often a contributing factor to social problems including spousal abuse and family breakdown.

The consumption of five or more drinks on one occasion is considered a fairly reliable indicator of heavy or binge drinking. An estimated 27.7% of current drinkers indicated they never consumed five or more drinks on one occasion in the previous year, another 25.9% said they did so less than once a month. This means about 46.4% of current drinkers, or 36% of the total NWT population 15 year of age and older, indicated they consumed five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a month in the twelve months prior to the survey. Moreover, 14.6% of current drinkers reported consuming five or more drinks on one occasion at least once a week.

The population subgroups most likely to engage in regular heavy alcohol consumption are very similar to the groups who indicated they normally consume five or more drinks described above. Males were more likely than females to report heavy drinking at least once a month (58.8% vs. 32%). They were also more likely to drink heavily at least once a week (20.7% vs.

Table 3.4.1
Heavy Drinking at Least Once per Month Past Year, by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers Pop. Estimate	Monthly heavy drinking (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	25,235	46.4	(42.6 - 50.3)	--	--
Male	13,641	58.8	(53.3 - 64.4)	3.42 *	(2.40 - 4.87)
Female †	11,594	32.0	(27.1 - 37.0)	1.00	--
Age Group					
15 - 24	5,785	64.5	(54.0 - 75.0)	5.23 *	(2.27 - 12.07)
25 - 39	9,137	49.2	(42.9 - 55.6)	3.93 *	(1.75 - 8.83)
40 - 59	8,464	35.2	(29.5 - 40.8)	2.17	(0.96 - 4.90)
60 + †	1,704	26.4[E]	(14.1 - 38.8)	1.00	--
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	7,877	63.4	(56.1 - 70.6)	1.00	--
Completed secondary	5,079	53.8	(45.1 - 62.6)	0.56 *	(0.33 - 0.94)
Some post-secondary	6,029	36.2	(28.8 - 43.5)	0.26 *	(0.15 - 0.45)
University degree	6,215	29.2	(22.6 - 35.6)	0.21 *	(0.11 - 0.37)
Household Income					
Low †	3,326	59.7	(48.9 - 70.5)	1.00	--
Middle	8,520	44.9	(38.7 - 51.2)	1.12	(0.59 - 2.13)
High	8,577	40.2	(33.7 - 46.7)	1.44	(0.71 - 2.93)
Not stated	4,810	51.5	(41.9 - 61.2)	1.01	(0.52 - 1.97)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

4 Government of the Northwest Territories Office of the Chief Coroner. 1999, 2000, 2001. *Northwest Territories Coroner's Service Annual Report*. Yellowknife.

7.7%). The rate of heavy drinking at least once a month was highest for residents between 15 and 24 years of age (see table 3.4.1). However, there were no significant differences between age groups in the rates of weekly heavy drinking (see table 3.4.2).

Individuals with some post-secondary education or a university degree were less likely than those with less education to drink heavily at least once a month. Meanwhile, persons with a university degree were less likely than those with less formal education to drink heavily at least once a week. When other demographic factors were taken into account, people with some post secondary education or a university degree had significantly lower odds of drinking heavily at least once a month or once a week or more than those with less than secondary level of schooling.

Individuals living in low income households were more likely than those living in middle or high income households to drink heavily at least once a month. However, when age, education levels and gender were taken into account the odds of those living in middle or high income households drinking heavily at least once a month were not significantly different from the odds for those who live in low income households (see table 3.4.1). No significant differences between income categories were noted in the proportion of the population who drink heavily at least once a week.

Table 3.4.2
Heavy Drinking at Least Once per Week Past Year, by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers Pop. Estimate	Weekly heavy drinking (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	25,235	14.6	(11.9 - 17.4)	–	–
Male	13,641	20.7	(16.1 - 25.2)	3.02 *	(1.81 - 5.04)
Female †	11,594	7.7[E]	(4.8 - 10.5)	1.00	–
Age Group					
15 - 24	5,785	14.4[E]	(6.7 - 22.1)	0.68	(0.35 - 1.32)
25 - 39	9,137	16.7	(11.9 - 21.5)	1.22	(0.70 - 2.13)
40 - 59	8,464	13.5	(9.4 - 17.5)	1.00	–
60 + †	1,704	F	–	–	–
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	7,877	21.7	(15.5 - 27.9)	1.00	–
Completed secondary	5,079	16.1[E]	(9.6 - 22.5)	0.61	(0.32 - 1.15)
Some post-secondary	6,029	14.7[E]	(9.3 - 20.1)	0.50 *	(0.26 - 0.95)
University degree	6,215	4.8[E]	(1.7 - 7.9)	0.15 *	(0.06 - 0.38)
Household Income					
Low †	3,326	17.1[E]	(8.8 - 25.4)	1.00	–
Middle	8,520	14.0	(9.6 - 18.4)	1.27	(0.57 - 2.83)
High	8,577	10.8	(6.7 - 15.0)	1.37	(0.56 - 3.35)
Not stated	4,810	20.9[E]	(13.1 - 28.8)	1.86	(0.83 - 4.18)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

3.5 Type of Drinker

As noted above, 5.4% of the territory's population 15 years of age and older had never drank alcohol and 16.7% had drank sometime during their lives but not during the twelve months preceding the survey. Table 3.5.1 shows that 31% of the population can be considered light infrequent drinkers. They drink less than once a week and on the days they do drink they usually consume less than five drinks. Meanwhile, 15.8% can be considered light frequent drinkers, 16.1% heavy infrequent drinkers and 15% of the population 15 years of older were classified as heavy frequent drinkers. Males were more likely than females to be heavy frequent drinkers (21.1% vs. 8.5%).

Table 3.5.1
Type of Drinker by Sex, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	..... Total		..... Male		..... Female	
Population 15 +	32,389		16,841		15,548	
	(%)	95% CI	(%)	95% CI	(%)	95% CI
Lifetime abstainer	5.4	(3.8 - 6.9)	4.6[E]	(2.4 - 6.7)	6.2[E]	(4.0 - 8.4)
Former	16.7	(14.2 - 19.3)	14.4	(10.9 - 18.0)	19.2	(15.6 - 22.8)
Light infrequent	31.0	(27.9 - 34.2)	22.2	(18.0 - 26.5)	40.5	(36.0 - 45.0)
Light frequent	15.8	(13.3 - 18.2)	19.4	(15.4 - 23.5)	11.8	(8.8 - 14.7)
Heavy infrequent	16.1	(13.6 - 18.6)	18.2	(14.3 - 22.1)	13.8	(10.6 - 17.0)
Heavy frequent	15.0	(12.6 - 17.5)	21.1	(17.0 - 25.3)	8.5	(5.9 - 11.0)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
Definitions
Lifetime abstainer - Never drank alcohol
Former drinker - Drank in the past but not in the 12 months preceding the survey
Light infrequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months less often than once a week and usually fewer than five drinksLight frequent drinker - Drank in past 12 months once a week or more and usually fewer than five drinks
Heavy infrequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months less often than once a week and usually five or more drinks
Heavy frequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months once a week or more and usually five or more drinks

3.6 Hazardous Use of Alcohol

The Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) was developed with support from the World Health Organization to identify hazardous patterns of alcohol use as well as indications of dependency. A summary score is created based on responses to ten items including: drinking frequency and amount, inability to stop drinking after starting, failure to meet expectations because of drinking, need for alcohol in the morning to get going, feelings of guilt after drinking, inability to remember what happened the night before because of drinking, injury as a result of drinking, having someone express concern about drinking. Higher scores on the AUDIT scale point to increased likelihood of alcohol problems. According to some guidelines, an AUDIT score of eight or more indicates harmful use of alcohol. [5]

Table 3.6.1 shows that an estimated 41.3% of current NWT drinkers 15 years of age and older scored eight or higher on the AUDIT scale. This means that approximately one-third of the NWT population 15 years of age and older - about 10,400 residents - had engaged in high-risk alcohol use in the year prior to the survey. The prevalence of hazardous drinking was significantly higher for men than women (52.3% vs. 28.6%). After age, education levels and income were taken into account the odds that men engaged in high-risk drinking were nearly four times higher than women.

5 Adlaf, E.M., Begin, P., & Sawka, E. (Eds.). (2005). *Canadian Addiction Survey (CAS): A national survey of Canadians' use of alcohol and other drugs: Prevalence of use and related harms: Detailed report.* Ottawa: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

Hazardous drinking was also strongly associated with age with 63.2% of individuals between 15 and 24 scoring eight or more on the AUDIT, compared to 25.5% of those between 40 and 59, and 19.3% 60 years of age and older. When the other demographic factors were taken into account, the odds of drinking hazardously for individuals between 15 and 24 years of age were over 10 times higher, and the odds for those between 25 and 39 were over eight times higher, than the corresponding odds for residents 60 years of age and older.

A strong relationship also exists between hazardous drinking and level of education with 71.4% of those with less than secondary education classified as high-risk drinkers compared to 16.4% of those with a university degree. When all of the other listed factors were taken into account, the odds of residents with less than secondary education drinking hazardously in the preceding year were 3.7 times higher than the odds for individuals who had completed secondary, 7.7 times higher than those who had some post-secondary education and 14.3 times higher than those with an university degree.

An estimated 79.9% of individuals living in low income households scored eight or more on the AUDIT, significantly higher than those living in middle and high income households (41.4% and 28.9% respectively). However, when all other factors were taken into account, the odds of drinking hazardously were no longer significantly different between income groups.

Table 3.6.1
Hazardous Drinking (AUDIT 8+) Past Year, by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers	Hazardous drinking (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	25,235	41.3	(37.5 - 45.2)	..	..
Male	13,641	52.3	(46.6 - 58.1)	3.95 *	(2.62 - 5.96)
Female †	11,594	28.6	(23.8 - 33.5)	1.00	..
Age Group					
15 - 24	5,785	63.2	(52.5 - 73.9)	10.14 *	(3.70 - 27.78)
25 - 39	9,137	46.1	(39.6 - 52.5)	8.30 *	(3.09 - 22.30)
40 - 59	8,464	25.5	(20.3 - 30.8)	3.16 *	(1.17 - 8.55)
60 + †	1,704	19.3[E]	(7.9 - 30.7)	1.00	..
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	7,877	71.4	(64.5 - 78.3)	1.00	..
Completed secondary	5,079	43.8	(34.8 - 52.8)	0.27 *	(0.15 - 0.49)
Some post-secondary	6,029	27.3	(20.4 - 34.2)	0.13 *	(0.07 - 0.23)
University degree	6,215	16.4[E]	(10.9 - 21.8)	0.07 *	(0.04 - 0.15)
Household Income					
Low †	3,326	77.0	(67.5 - 86.5)	1.00	..
Middle	8,520	39.1	(32.9 - 45.3)	0.55	(0.26 - 1.16)
High	8,577	28.0	(21.9 - 34.0)	0.65	(0.29 - 1.46)
Not stated	4,810	46.0	(36.2 - 55.8)	0.41	(0.19 - 0.87)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

4 Cannabis Use

The following chapter looks at the use of cannabis (marijuana and hashish). Lifetime use is based on a question that asked if the individual had "used or tried marijuana or hashish" during their life. Past-year prevalence is based on a follow-up question that asked, "have you used marijuana or hashish in the past twelve months?" Past-year users were asked how often they used marijuana or hashish during the past three months, and if they changed both the quantity consumed and frequency of consumption over the previous twelve months compared to the year before. To obtain some indication of possible problems associated with cannabis use individuals were asked whether "a friend or anyone else ever expressed concern about the use of marijuana or hashish" and whether they "ever tried to control, cut down or stop using marijuana or hashish."

4.1 Lifetime Use

Overall, 59.9% of NWT residents age 15 years and older reported using cannabis at least once in their lifetime. An estimated 10.7% indicated they tried it just once while 49.1% said they had used marijuana or hashish more than once. Males were more likely than females to have ever used cannabis (68% vs. 51.1%). Lifetime cannabis use was highest among residents 15 to 24 years of age (70.7%) and those between 25 and 39 years of age (65.8%). An estimated 59.4% of residents between 40 and 59 years of age used cannabis at least once in their lifetime, but the proportion dropped dramatically for those 60 years of age and older (14%). Meanwhile, the proportion of the NWT population reporting lifetime cannabis use was similar regardless of education and income levels (see table 4.1.1).

Table 4.1.1
Used Cannabis During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Ever Used Cannabis (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	32,389	59.9	(56.6 - 63.2)	--	--
Male	16,841	68.0	(63.3 - 72.7)	2.18 *	(1.62 - 2.95)
Female †	15,548	51.1	(46.6 - 55.7)	1.00	--
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	6,979	70.7	(61.7 - 79.7)	1.00	--
25 - 39	10,918	65.8	(60.3 - 71.4)	0.79	(0.50 - 1.22)
40 - 59	11,306	59.4	(54.3 - 64.4)	0.57 *	(0.37 - 0.88)
60 +	2,994	14.0[E]	(6.9 - 21.0)	0.06 *	(0.03 - 0.13)
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	11,515	58.4	(52.6 - 64.2)	1.00	--
Completed secondary	6,473	63.6	(56.1 - 71.1)	0.98	(0.62 - 1.54)
Some post-secondary	7,121	62.3	(55.5 - 69.0)	0.94	(0.59 - 1.48)
University degree	7,233	57.0	(50.2 - 63.7)	0.78	(0.48 - 1.27)
Household Income					
Low †	4,920	58.3	(49.9 - 66.7)	1.00	--
Middle	10,785	60.0	(54.4 - 65.5)	1.02	(0.60 - 1.72)
High	9,873	62.6	(56.7 - 68.5)	1.12	(0.63 - 1.99)
Not Stated	6,811	57.0	(49.0 - 65.0)	0.77	(0.45 - 1.32)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

4.2 Past-year Use

An estimated 6,700 residents age 15 and older indicated they had used cannabis in the 12 months prior to the survey. This represents 20.7% of the population in this age group. Males were more likely than females to have used cannabis during the previous year (25.5% vs. 15.4%). Nearly half of youth and young adults (46.3%) between 15 and 24 years of age used cannabis in the year preceding the survey, compared to 22.3% of those between 25 and 39, and 8.6% of individuals between 40 and 59 years of age (all differences were significant). When sex, education and income levels were taken into account, the odds that residents between 15 and 24 would report using cannabis in the previous year were more than two times the odds for residents between 25 and 39, and over seven times the odds for those between 40 and 59 years of age (see table 4.2.1).

The proportion of the population who reported they used cannabis in the past year decreased as education levels increased. An estimated 32% of residents without a high school diploma indicated they used cannabis during the previous year, compared to 20.9% of those who completed high school, 16% of those with some post-secondary education, and 7.1% of those with a university degree. Past year cannabis use also decreased with each increase in income levels. However, unlike education levels, differences in adjusted odds ratios were not significantly different.

Table 4.2.1
Used Cannabis Past Year, by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Past Year Cannabis Use (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total		32,389	20.7	(17.9 - 23.4)	
Male	16,841	25.5	(21.1 - 29.9)	2.26 *	(1.52 - 3.35)
Female †	15,548	15.4	(12.1 - 18.7)	1.00	–
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	6,979	46.3	(36.5 - 56.1)	1.00	–
25 - 39	10,918	22.3	(17.4 - 27.2)	0.42 *	(0.27 - 0.66)
40 - 59	11,306	8.6[E]	(5.7 - 11.5)	0.13 *	(0.08 - 0.23)
60 +	2,994	F	–	–	–
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	11,515	32.0	(26.4 - 37.5)	1.00	–
Completed secondary	6,473	20.9	(14.5 - 27.2)	0.47 *	(0.28 - 0.80)
Some post-secondary	7,121	16.0	(10.9 - 21.1)	0.48 *	(0.27 - 0.84)
University degree	7,233	7.1[E]	(3.6 - 10.6)	0.30 *	(0.11 - 0.49)
Household Income					
Low †	4,920	32.8	(24.8 - 40.8)	1.00	–
Middle	10,785	18.9	(14.4 - 23.3)	0.68	(0.38 - 1.25)
High	9,873	12.2[E]	(8.2 - 16.2)	0.68	(0.34 - 1.39)
Not Stated	6,811	27.0	(19.8 - 34.1)	0.73	(0.40 - 1.33)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability: data was suppressed.

The majority of individuals who reported using marijuana or hashish in the past year also reported using in the three months prior to the survey. The characteristics of those who used cannabis in the past three months were similar to past-year users. The frequency of use among past-year users varied: 20% indicated they used cannabis daily or almost daily in the previous three months, 19.1% reported weekly use, 19.9% monthly, 26.9% reported less than monthly use and 14.1% of past-year users indicated they never used cannabis in the three months preceding the survey (see table 4.2.2).

Table 4.2.2
Frequency of Cannabis Use Past Three Months, Population Age 15+ and Past-year Users Age 15+, NWT 2004

Population Estimate	.... Total Population 32,389		.... Past-year Users 6,674	
	(%)	95% CI	(%)	95% CI
Daily or almost daily	4.0[E]	(2.7 - 5.3)	20.0[E]	(13.3 - 26.7)
Weekly	3.8[E]	(2.5 - 5.1)	19.1[E]	(12.5 - 25.7)
Monthly	4.0[E]	(2.7 - 5.3)	19.9[E]	(13.2 - 26.6)
Less than monthly	5.4	(3.9 - 6.9)	26.9	(19.5 - 34.4)
Never	82.8	(80.3 - 85.4)	14.1[E]	(8.2 - 19.9)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

5 Use of Other Illicit Drugs

This chapter takes a look at use of a number of other illicit drugs including cocaine or crack cocaine, hallucinogens such as PCP and LSD, speed and ecstasy. As in the previous chapter, lifetime and past-year use are examined.

5.1 Lifetime Use

Excluding cannabis, the most commonly used illicit drug over residents' lifetime were hallucinogens (11.7%) and cocaine or crack cocaine (11.6%), followed by speed (3%) and ecstasy (3%), and inhalants (glue, gasoline or other solvents) at 2.7%. Males were more likely than females to have used or tried hallucinogens (17.3% vs. 5.7%) and cocaine (15.7% vs. 7.2%). There were no significant differences in the lifetime use of these two illicit drugs between any of the age groups examined (see table 5.1.1). Nor were there differences

Table 5.1.1
Lifetime Use of Listed Illicit Drugs, by Sex & by Age Groups, Population Age 15+, NWT 2004

Population Estimate	Total 32,389 (%)	Male 16,841 (%)	Female 15,548 (%)	15 - 24 6,979 (%)	25 - 39 10,918 (%)	40 - 59 11,306 (%)	60 + 2,994 (%)
Cocaine or Crack	11.6 (9.5 - 13.8)	15.7 (12.1 - 19.4)	7.2[E] (4.9 - 9.6)	12.5[E] (6.0 - 19.0)	15.4 (11.1 - 19.6)	10.2 (7.1 - 13.4)	F -
Hallucinogens	11.7 (9.6 - 13.9)	17.3 (13.5 - 21.2)	5.7[E] (3.6 - 7.8)	10.7[E] (4.6 - 16.8)	14.1 (10.0 - 18.1)	13.4 (9.9 - 16.9)	F -
Ecstasy	3.0[E] (1.9 - 4.2)	3.3[E] (1.5 - 5.1)	2.8[E] (1.3 - 4.2)	9.6[E] (3.8 - 15.4)	F -	F -	F -
Speed	3.0[E] (1.8 - 4.1)	3.9[E] (2.0 - 5.9)	1.9[E] (0.7 - 3.2)	F -	F -	5.3[E] (3.0 - 7.6)	F -
Inhalants	2.7[E] (2.7 - 1.6)	2.6[E] (1.0 - 4.2)	2.9[E] (1.4 - 4.5)	F -	4.4[E] (2.0 - 6.8)	2.6[E] (1.0 - 4.3)	F -
Heroin	1.2[E] (0.5 - 1.9)	F -	F -	F -	F -	F -	F -
Steroids	F -	F -	F -	F -	F -	F -	F -
Any 5 illicit drugs1	17.6 (15.0 - 20.1)	24.0 (19.7 - 28.3)	10.6 (7.8 - 13.4)	18.8 (11.1 - 26.5)	22.1 (17.2 - 27.0)	16.8 (12.9 - 20.6)	F -
Any 6 illicit drugs2	60.7 (57.4 - 64.0)	69.1 (64.5 - 73.8)	51.5 (47.0 - 56.1)	70.7 (61.7 - 79.7)	66.3 (60.7 - 71.8)	60.5 (55.5 - 65.5)	16.1 (8.6 - 23.7)
Any 8 drugs3	60.9 (57.6 - 64.2)	69.5 (64.9 - 74.2)	51.5 (47.0 - 56.1)	70.7 (61.7 - 79.7)	67.0 (61.4 - 72.5)	60.5 (55.5 - 65.5)	16.1 (8.6 - 23.7)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.
1 Any five illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens and heroin.
2 Any six illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens, heroin and cannabis.
3 Any eight illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens, heroin, cannabis, inhalants and steroids.

between males and females or age groups in lifetime use of any of the other listed illicit drugs.

An estimated 17.6% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older - approximately 5,700 individuals - indicated they had used any of the following five illicit drugs at some point in their lifetime: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy or heroin. Males were more likely than females to have used one or more of these drugs (24.0% vs. 10.6%). There were no significant differences between age groups. Individuals with a high school diploma or some post-secondary education were more likely than those with less than secondary education or a university degree to report the use of the five listed illicit drugs at some point in their lifetime (see table 5.1.2).

Table 5.1.2
Used Any of Five Illicit Drugs1 During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Ever used any of 5 Illicit Drugs (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	32,389	17.6	(15.0 - 20.1)	--	--
Male	16,841	24.0	(19.7 - 28.3)	2.64 *	(1.78 - 3.91)
Female †	15,548	10.6	(7.8 - 13.4)	1.00	--
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	6,979	18.8[E]	(11.1 - 26.5)	1.00	
25 - 39	10,918	22.1	(17.2 - 27.0)	1.41	(0.86 - 2.32)
40 - 59	11,306	16.8	(12.9 - 20.6)	0.95	(0.56 - 1.59)
60 +	2,994	F	--	--	--
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	11,515	13.5	(9.4 - 17.5)	1.00	
Completed secondary	6,473	24.8	(18.1 - 31.6)	1.77 *	(1.04 - 3.03)
Some post-secondary	7,121	22.1	(16.4 - 27.9)	1.47	(0.85 - 2.55)
University degree	7,233	13.1[E]	(8.5 - 17.7)	0.83	(0.43 - 1.58)
Household Income					
Low †	4,267	11.5[E]	(6.1 - 17.0)	1.00	--
Middle	9,293	20.2	(15.6 - 24.7)	1.47	(0.73 - 2.95)
High	12,018	17.2	(12.6 - 21.8)	1.20	(0.56 - 2.57)
Not Stated	6,812	18.4[E]	(12.1 - 24.6)	1.33	(0.64 - 2.74)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Any five illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens and heroin.
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

When cannabis was added to the list five drugs above, the proportion of the NWT age 15 years and older reporting lifetime use of any of the resulting six illicit drugs increased to 60.7% (see table 5.1.3). Males were more likely than females to report lifetime use of any of the listed six illicit rugs (69.1% vs. 51.5%). Residents 60 years of age and older were significantly less likely than younger individuals to report the use of any of the drugs. When the other demographic factors were taken into account, residents between 40 and 59, as well as those 60 years of age and older, had significantly lower odds of reporting lifetime use of any of these drugs than residents between 15 and 24 years of age. There were no significant differences between any of the other population sub-groups studied.

Table 5.1.3
Used Any of Six Illicit Drugs1 During Lifetime by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Ever used any of 6 Illicit Drugs (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	32,389	60.7	(57.4 - 64.0)	–	–
Male	16,841	69.1	(64.5 - 73.8)	2.28 *	(1.68 - 3.07)
Female †	15,548	51.5	(47.0 - 56.1)	1.00	–
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	6,979	70.7	(61.7 - 79.7)	1.00	–
25 - 39	10,918	66.3	(60.7 - 71.8)	0.80	(0.52 - 1.25)
40 - 59	11,306	60.5	(55.5 - 65.5)	0.60 *	(0.39 - 0.93)
60 +	2,994	16.1	(8.6 - 23.7)	0.07 *	(0.03 - 0.15)
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	11,515	59.1	(53.3 - 64.9)	1.00	
Completed secondary	6,473	65.3	(57.9 - 72.8)	1.05	(0.67 - 1.66)
Some post-secondary	7,121	62.9	(56.2 - 69.6)	0.94	(0.60 - 1.49)
University degree	7,233	57.3	(50.5 - 64.0)	0.76	(0.47 - 1.25)
Household Income					
Low †	4,267	60.0	(51.7 - 68.4)	1.00	–
Middle	9,293	60.5	(54.9 - 66.0)	0.96	(0.57 - 1.62)
High	12,018	63.7	(57.8 - 69.6)	1.10	(0.61 - 1.95)
Not Stated	6,812	57.1	(49.1 - 65.1)	0.72	(0.42 - 1.23)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Any six illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens, heroin and cannabis.
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
E High sampling variability interpret with caution.

5.2 Past-Year Use

An estimated 1.8% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older - about 570 individuals - indicated they used cocaine or crack in the year prior to the survey. However, due to very high sampling variability this estimate should be used with extreme caution. Sampling variability was too high to report past-year use for any of the other listed drugs (see table 5.2.1). Meanwhile, 2.7% of residents reported the use of at least one of the following five illicit drugs in the year preceding the survey: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy or heroin. When inhalants and steroids were added to the list, the percentage of the population reporting past-year use increased to 3.1%, or about 1,000 individuals 15 years of age and older.

Table 5.2.1
Used Drugs Past Year by Type of Drug, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

Population Estimate	32,389	
	%	95% C.I.
Cocaine or Crack	1.8[E]	(0.9 - 2.7)
Hallucinogens	F	--
Ecstasy	F	--
Speed	F	--
Inhalants	F	--
Heroin	F	--
Steroids	F	--
Any of five illicit drugs1	2.7[E]	(1.6 - 3.9)
Any of seven drugs2	3.1[E]	(1.9 - 4.3)
Any of eight drugs3	20.9	(18.1 - 23.6)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Includes the following: cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy or heroin
2 Includes the following: cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants or steroids
3 Includes the following: cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants, steroids or cannabis
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability, data suppressed.

When cannabis was added to the list of drugs used in the past year, prevalence increased to 20.9%, about the same as past-year use of cannabis only (see section 4.2). Practically all of the residents who reported using any of the listed five illicit drugs in the previous year also used cannabis. Table 5.2.2 shows that 20.8% of the population 15 years of age and older reported they used at least one of the following six illicit drugs in the year preceding the survey: cannabis, cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy or heroin. Past-year use was higher among males than females, higher for younger age groups compared to older age groups, and higher for those with lower levels of education compared to those with higher education.

Table 5.2.2
Used Any of Six Illicit Drugs1 Past Year, by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Population Estimate	Past-year use of any 6 Illicit Drugs (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	32,389	20.8	(18.1 - 23.6)	--	--
Male	16,841	25.8	(21.4 - 30.3)	2.30 *	(1.55 - 3.41)
Female †	15,548	15.5	(12.2 - 18.8)	1.00	
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	6,979	46.5	(36.6 - 56.3)	1.00	--
25 - 39	10,918	22.6	(17.6 - 27.5)	0.43 *	(0.28 - 0.67)
40 - 59	11,306	8.6[E]	(5.7 - 11.5)	0.14 *	(0.08 - 0.23)
60 +	2,994	F	--	--	--
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	11,515	32.4	(26.8 - 37.9)	1.00	--
Completed secondary	6,473	21.0	(14.6 - 27.4)	0.47 *	(0.28 - 0.80)
Some post-secondary	7,121	16.1	(11.0 - 21.3)	0.48 *	(0.27 - 0.84)
University degree	7,233	7.1[E]	(3.6 - 10.6)	0.23 *	(0.11 - 0.49)
Household Income					
Low †	4,267	33.4	(25.3 - 41.5)	1.00	--
Middle	9,293	19.0	(14.6 - 23.5)	0.68	(0.37 - 1.25)
High	12,018	12.3	(8.2 - 16.3)	0.67	(0.33 - 1.37)
Not Stated	6,812	27.1	(19.9 - 34.3)	0.72	(0.39 - 1.31)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Any six illicit drugs include: cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens, heroin and cannabis.
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability, data suppressed.

6 Alcohol and Drug-related Problems

This chapter looks at alcohol and drug problems experienced by NWT residents. Harmful consequences in eight areas due to one's own use of alcohol and drugs are explored. People's negative experiences due to alcohol use of others are also examined.

6.1 Harm From Own Drinking

Respondents to the survey were asked if their use of alcohol ever had harmful effects on their friendships, physical health, home life, work or studies. They were also asked if they ever had financial, legal or housing problems, or difficulty learning because of their use of alcohol. Those who answered yes to any of these questions were asked if the negative impact had occurred in the past year. Table 6.1.1 shows the estimated proportion of lifetime drinkers who ever experienced an adverse consequence along with the proportion of current drinker who reported a negative result in the past year. In total, 40.9% of current or former drinkers indicated they had experienced at least one of the listed harmful consequences of drinking at some point in their lifetime. Meanwhile, 22% of current drinkers reported they had experienced at least one of the harmful effects in the past year.

Table 6.1.1
Reported Self-harm from Alcohol Use by Type of Harm, Lifetime and Past-Year, Lifetime and Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

Types of harm	Lifetime1 %	Lifetime1 95% C.I.	Past-year2 %	Past-year2 95% C.I.
One or more types of harm	40.9	(37.5 - 44.3)	22.0	(18.7 - 25.3)
Friendships or social life	28.2	(25.1 - 31.3)	13.4	(10.7 - 16.0)
Physical health	21.2	(18.3 - 24.0)	9.8	(7.5 - 12.1)
Home life or marriage	21.2	(18.4 - 24.0)	10.2	(7.8 - 12.5)
Work, studies or employment opportunities	14.0	(11.6 - 16.5)	7.5	(5.5 - 9.5)
Financial position	18.6	(15.9 - 21.4)	8.3	(6.2 - 10.5)
Legal problems	9.6	(7.6 - 11.7)	1.9[E]	(0.9 - 3.0)
Housing problems	5.0	(3.5 - 6.6)	F	–
Learning	5.5	(3.9 - 7.1)	1.6[E]	(0.6 - 2.5)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Harm ever in lifetime: proportion of lifetime drinkers.
2 Harm in past year: proportion of current drinkers.
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

Harmful effects on friendships or social life, physical health, and home life or marriage were the most commonly noted types, both at any time, and in the past year. An estimated 10.2% of current NWT drinkers reported that their alcohol use had a harmful effect on their home life or marriage. In other words, 7.9% of the territorial population 15 years of age and older - about 2,500 individuals - indicated their drinking had negatively impacted this critical area of their life in the year preceding the survey. Meanwhile, 13.4% of current drinkers reported adverse effects on their friendships or social life, 9.8% indicated their physical health was negatively impacted, and 8.3% said they had experienced financial troubles in the previous year.

Table 6.1.2 provides a closer look at the characteristics of residents who reported at least one harmful effect due to their own drinking in the past year. Interestingly, while men were significantly more likely than women to report frequent heavy drinking and high-risk alcohol use in the previous year, the proportion reporting some harmful effect from their own drinking was similar for both sexes (23.4% for males and 20.3% for females). Meanwhile, younger residents were more likely than older residents to experience at least one adverse

Table 6.1.2
At Least One Harm Past Year From Own Drinking by Selected Characteristics, Current Drinkers Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Current Drinkers	At least one harm past year (%)	95% CI (%)	Adjusted Odds Ratio	95% CI
Total	25,235	22.0	(18.7 - 25.3)	--	--
Male	13,641	23.4	(18.6 - 28.2)	1.22	(0.78 - 1.92)
Female †	11,594	20.3	(16.0 - 24.7)	1.00	--
Age Group					
15 - 24 †	5,785	43.9	(32.7 - 55.1)	1.00	--
25 - 39	9,137	19.6	(14.4 - 24.7)	0.48 *	(0.28 - 0.83)
40 - 59	8,464	12.3[E]	(8.3 - 16.2)	0.37 *	(0.20 - 0.68)
60 +	1,704	F	--	--	--
Highest Level of Schooling					
Less than secondary †	7,877	48.5	(40.9 - 56.1)	1.00	--
Completed secondary	5,079	21.4[E]	(14.0 - 28.8)	0.34 *	(0.19 - 0.60)
Some post-secondary	6,029	8.0[E]	(3.8 - 12.2)	0.12 *	(0.06 - 0.26)
University degree	6,215	F	--	--	--
Household Income					
Low †	3,326	54.0	(43.0 - 65.0)	1.00	--
Middle	8,520	22.3	(17.0 - 27.7)	0.73	(0.38 - 1.40)
High	8,577	6.7[E]	(3.3 - 10.0)	0.35 *	(0.15 - 0.80)
Not stated	4,810	27.7[E]	(18.6 - 36.7)	0.56	(0.28 - 1.10)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

consequence - 43.9% of individuals between 15 and 24 years of age compared to 19.6% of those between 25 and 39, and 12.3% between 40 and 59 years of age.

Residents with lower levels of education were more likely than those with higher levels to report at least one alcohol-related problem in the past year. This relationship held when the other demographic variables in table 6.1.2 were taken into account. After adjustment, the odds that people with less than secondary education reported at least one harmful effect from drinking was 2.9 times higher than those who had completed secondary and 8.3 times those with some post-secondary education. While individuals living in low income households were more likely than those living in middle and high income households to experience adverse alcohol-related consequences, the difference was significant only between high and low income groups when age, education levels and sex were taken into account.

6.2 Harm from Other People's Drinking

The 2004 NWT Addictions Survey asked respondents if they had experienced any of a number of problems due to other people's drinking. Results show that victimization due to alcohol consumption is a problem in the territory. An estimated 55.9% of the population 15 years of age and older experienced at least one form of harm due to other people's drinking in the year prior to the survey. About one in three residents had been insulted or humiliated by someone who had been drinking (34.9%), or had serious arguments as a result of someone else's drinking (31.9%). Meanwhile, 27.2% indicated they had been pushed or shoved by

Table 6.2.1
Reporting Harm from Other People's Alcohol Use Past Year, by Type of Harm, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

NWT Population Estimate	32,389	
	%	95% C.I.
One or more types of harm	55.9	(52.6 - 59.3)
Insulted or humiliated	34.9	(31.7 - 38.1)
Family or marriage problems	21.1	(18.3 - 23.8)
Pushed or shoved	27.2	(24.2 - 30.2)
Serious arguments or quarrels	31.9	(28.7 - 35.0)
Verbal abuse	26.9	(23.9 - 29.9)
Hit or physically assaulted	13.5	(11.2 - 15.8)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey

someone who had been drinking, and 13.5% had been hit or physically assaulted. About one in five residents had family problems or marriage difficulties (see table 6.2.1).

Table 6.2.2 shows that males were significantly more likely than females to experience at least one adverse experience from other people's drinking (60.3% vs. 51.3%). When age, education levels and household income were taken into account the odds of males experiencing one harm or more were about 1.5 times higher than females. When type of drinker and frequency of heavy drinking were also taken into account, the difference between men and women was still significant (1.4 times higher).

When different age groups were compared, the proportion of the population reporting harm from other people's drinking was highest for those between 15 and 24 years of age and lowest for those 60 years and older. After taking highest level of schooling, household income and gender into account the odds that residents between 15 and 24 would report alcohol-related harm was nearly three times higher than those between 25 and 39, and ten times higher than those 60 and older. These differences remained when patterns of alcohol consumption were also taken into account (see table 6.2.2).

Individuals with less than secondary school education were significantly more likely than those with higher levels of schooling to report harm due to other people's drinking. However, when all other factors where taken into account only those who completed high school had significantly lower odds than those with less than secondary education of experiencing harm from other people's drinking.

Individuals living in high income households were less likely than those living in middle and low income households to report an adverse experience due to other people's drinking (47.1%, 59.2% and 64.1% respectively). When age, sex and education levels were taken into account, individuals living in high income households had significantly lower odds than those living in low income households of experiencing harm due to other people's drinking. This difference was also noted when alcohol consumption patterns were also taken into consideration.

There is some evidence to suggest that individuals who drink heavily are at increased risk of harm from people who are also drinking. Heavy drinkers were more likely than those who did not drink heavily to experience harm from other people's drinking. Nearly three out of every four heavy drinkers (73.3%) reported harm in the past year compared to 48.2% of light drinkers, 50% of former drinkers and 36.2% of those who never drank in their lifetime. Moreover, an estimated 53% of individuals who were either verbally abused or physically assaulted by someone who had been drinking indicated that at the time of the incident they were also drinking. [6]

6 The proportion of respondents who did not provide an answer to this question was very high (24%) Therefore, this result should be interpreted with extreme caution.

Table 6.2.2
At Least One Harm Past in Year From Other People Drinking, by Selected Characteristics, Population Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	NWT Population Estimate	At least one harm past year (%)	95% CI	Adjusted Odds Ratio demographic factors	95% CI	Adjusted Odds Ratio all factors	95% CI
Total	32,389	55.9	(52.6 - 59.3)	--	--	--	--
Male	16,841	60.3	(55.3 - 65.2)	1.49 *	(1.11 - 2.00)	1.38 *	(1.00 - 1.89)
Female †	15,548	51.3	(46.7 - 55.8)	1.00	--	1.00	--
Age Group							
15 - 24 †	6,979	77.6	(69.4 - 85.8)	1.00	--	1.00	--
25 - 39	10,918	56.2	(50.4 - 62.0)	0.37 *	(0.24 - 0.58)	0.31 *	(0.19 - 0.51)
40 - 59	11,306	49.3	(44.1 - 54.5)	0.30 *	(0.19 - 0.46)	0.31 *	(0.19 - 0.50)
60 +	2,994	29.0	(19.7 - 38.3)	0.10 *	(0.05 - 0.18)	0.11 *	(0.06 - 0.22)
Highest Level of Schooling							
Less than secondary †	11,515	63.6	(58.0 - 69.3)	1.00	--	1.00	--
Completed secondary	6,473	51.2	(43.3 - 59.0)	0.56 *	(0.36 - 0.88)	0.64	(0.40 - 1.02)
Some post-secondary	7,121	51.9	(44.9 - 58.9)	0.70	(0.45 - 1.09)	0.85	(0.53 - 1.38)
University degree	7,233	51.8	(45.0 - 58.7)	0.87	(0.54 - 1.40)	1.30	(0.77 - 2.17)
Household Income							
Low †	4,920	64.1	(56.0 - 72.3)	1.00	--	1.00	--
Middle	10,786	59.2	(53.7 - 64.8)	0.87	(0.52 - 1.46)	0.76	(0.44 - 1.32)
High	9,872	47.1	(40.9 - 53.2)	0.56 *	(0.32 - 0.99)	0.50 *	(0.28 - 0.92)
Not stated	6,812	57.5	(49.5 - 65.5)	0.63	(0.37 - 1.08)	0.67	(0.38 - 1.20)
Type of Drinker							
Lifetime abstainer†	1,738	36.2[E]	(21.1 - 51.3)			1.00	--
Former drinker	5,417	50.6	(42.6 - 58.5)			2.99 *	(1.36 - 6.61)
Light infrequent drinker	9,827	48.8	(42.6 - 55.0)			1.80	(0.82 - 3.97)
Light frequent drinker	4,990	46.9	(38.9 - 54.9)			1.51	(0.61 - 3.74)
Heavy infrequent drinker	5,088	79.1	(72.0 - 86.2)			4.83 *	(1.81 - 12.62)
Heavy frequent drinker	4,762	67.1	,58.0 - 76.2)			2.37	(0.90 - 6.26)
Frequency of Heavy Drinking (5 +)							
Never †	14,050	42.9	(38.0 - 47.8)			1.00	--
Less than monthly	6,468	61.6	(54.3 - 68.8)			1.79 *	(1.09 - 2.93)
Monthly or more	11,573	68.8	(63.2 - 74.4)			1.79 *	(1.04 - 3.09)

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
† Reference category for which odds ratio is always 1.00
* Significantly different from estimate for reference category ($p < 0.05$).
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.

8 Adlaf, E.M., Begin, P., & Sawka, E. (eds.). (2005). *Canadian Addiction Survey (CAS): A national survey of Canadians' use of alcohol and other drugs: Prevalence of use and related harms: Detailed Report.* Ottawa: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

9 The confidence intervals in table 8.1.1 slightly overlap when the NWT is compared to British Columbia and Quebec. However, it is important to keep in mind that this method is a conservative approximation; statistical tests do show a significant difference.

6.3 Harm from Own Use of Illicit Drugs

Table 6.3.1 shows the percentage of current drug users who reported various forms of self-harm due to their drug use in the year prior to the survey.[7] The table provides information for past-year users of any of the following seven drugs: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants or steroids. The occurrence of harmful effects for past-year users of cannabis along with any of the drugs listed above was also examined. An estimated 39.2% of current drug users in this latter group reported at least one harmful effect from their drug use in the previous year. Harm to their physical health was the most common type noted (20.6%), followed by harm to their friendships or social life (17.1%) and harm to their financial position (16.4%). When cannabis was excluded from the list of illicit drugs the proportion of drug users who reported at least one harmful effect due to their drug use was estimated to be 79%. Damage to friendships or social life was also the most common type of injury noted by this group of drug users (64.4%).

Table 6.3.1
Reported Self-harm from Drug Use Past-Year by Type of Harm, Current Drug Users Age 15 +, NWT 2004

	Including Cannabis[1]		Excluding Cannabis[2]	
Number of Current Users	6,758		1,003	
	%	95% C.I.	%	95% C.I.
One or more types of harm	39.2	(30.9 - 47.5)	79.0[E]	(56.9 - 100.0)
Friendships or social life	17.1[E]	(10.7 - 23.4)	F	--
Physical health	20.6[E]	(13.7 - 27.4)	64.4[E]	(39.3 - 89.5)
Home life or marriage	10.7[E]	(5.5 - 15.9)	F	--
Work, studies or employment opportunities	12.1[E]	(6.6 - 17.5)	F	--
Financial position	16.4[E]	(10.2 - 22.6)	F	--
Legal problems	F	--	F	--
Housing problems	F	--	F	--
Learning	F	--	F	--

Source: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey
1 Any of following eight drugs: cannabis, cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants or steroids
2 Any of following seven drugs: cocaine, speed, hallucinogens, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants or steroids
[E] High sampling variability interpret with caution.
F Extremely high sampling variability; data was suppressed.

7 Lifetime harm is not presented due to the high non-response rate reported in section 2.6

7 Comparisons with Other Provinces

The questionnaire for the 2004 NWT Addictions Survey was derived from the questionnaire used in the Canadian Addiction Survey (CAS). As a result, it is possible to compare estimates obtained from the NWT survey with those acquired from the national survey. The Canadian and provincial estimates presented in this chapter were obtained from the following report: Canadian Addiction Survey *(CAS): A national survey of Canadians' use of alcohol and other drugs: Prevalence of use and related harms: Detailed Report.*[8] Yukon Health and Social Services carried out the Yukon Addictions Survey using questions also derived from the CAS. Yukon estimates were obtained from the report: *Yukon Addictions Survey (YAS): Preliminary Results 2005.*

7.1 Past-Year Use of Alcohol, Cannabis & Other Illicit Drugs

The proportion of the NWT population 15 years of age and older who indicated drinking alcohol in the year prior to the survey was similar to percentages reported in the Yukon and in the other provinces (see table 7.1.1). In general, about 80% of Canadians in this age group can be considered current drinkers. Meanwhile, the prevalence of cannabis use in the year preceding the survey in the NWT was similar to the rate in the Yukon but significantly higher than in any other province.[9] An estimated 20.7% of NWT residents in this age group indicated they used cannabis in the past year, compared to 21% in the Yukon, 16.8% in British Columbia, 15.8% in Quebec and 14.1% for the ten provinces combined. When the past-year use of five other illicit drugs - cocaine, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens and heroin - was examined, the prevalence in the NWT was similar to the prevalence reported in other provinces (see table 7.1.1).

Table 7.1.1
Prevalence of Alcohol & Other Drug Use in Past Year, by NWT & Selected Provinces, Population Age 15 +, 2004

	Alcohol (%)	Cannabis (%)	Five Illicit Drugs1 (%)
Northwest Territories	77.9 (75.1 - 80.7)	20.7 (17.9 - 23.4)	2.7[E] (1.6 - 3.9)
Yukon	79 N.A.	21 N.A.	N.A. N.A.
Newfoundland & Labrador	73.9 (70.9 - 76.7)	11.6 (9.6 - 13.9)	1.4[E] (0.7 - 2.5)
Nova Scotia	76.0 (73.1 - 78.7)	14.4 (12.2 - 17.0)	2.3[E] (1.5 - 3.6)
Quebec	82.3 (79.7 - 84.6)	15.8 (13.6 - 18.2)	4.0 (2.9 - 5.4)
Ontario	78.7 (76.0 - 81.3)	12.4 (10.4 - 14.6)	2.3[E] (1.5 - 3.5)
Saskatchewan	78.2 (75.5 - 80.7)	11.4 (9.6 - 13.5)	2.8[E] (2.0 - 4.0)
Alberta	79.5 (77.7 - 81.2)	15.4 (13.9 - 17.0)	3.3 (2.7 - 4.2)
British Columbia	79.3 (77.7 - 80.7)	16.8 (15.5 - 18.3)	4.0 (3.3 - 4.8)
Total - Ten Provinces	79.3 (78.1 - 80.5)	14.1 (13.1 - 15.1)	3.0 (2.6 - 3.6)

Sources: NWT - 2004 NWT Addictions Survey;
Yukon - Yukon Health & Social Services. 2005. Yukon Addictions Survey: Preliminary Results 2005;
Provinces - Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. 2005. Canadian Addiction Survey: Detailed Report
1 Five illicit drugs include: cocaine or crack, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens and heroin.
N.A. - Not available

Table 7.1.2 provides a closer look at patterns of alcohol use. The proportion of the population considered former drinkers was higher in the NWT than in Ontario and Quebec, and possibly the Yukon, but about the same as the other selected provinces. The rate of light infrequent drinking was lower for NWT residents than all other selected jurisdictions except Newfoundland and Labrador, and possibly the Yukon. The proportion of the NWT population classified as light frequent drinkers was lower than the total provincial rate, but similar to the rate for Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, NWT residents were significantly more likely than residents in all Canadian provinces to be heavy drinkers. They were also more likely to be heavy drinkers than their Yukon counterparts. An estimated 31.1% of the population 15 years of age and older were classified as heavy drinkers, compared to 18% in the Yukon, 15.4% in Alberta, 22.6% in Newfoundland and Labrador, and 12.7% for the ten provinces combined.

Table 7.1.2 also provides the proportion of the population who scored eight or more on the AUDIT scale. As noted in chapter three, this standardized scale is used to identify hazardous patterns of alcohol use as well as indications of dependency with a score of eight or more indicating harmful use of alcohol. NWT residents were significantly more likely than residents in all other provinces to engage in high-risk drinking. An estimated 31.9% of the NWT population 15 years of age and older had an AUDIT scores of eight or more, nearly two times higher than Newfoundland and Labrador (16.9%), the province with the highest rate, and just over two times higher than the ten provinces combined (13.6%).

Table 7.1.2
Type of Drinker and Population Reporting AUDIT 8+ Score, by NWT & Selected Provinces, Population Age 15+, 2004

	Abstainer (%)	Former Drinker (%)	Light Infrequent (%)	Light Frequent (%)	Heavy Infrequent (%)	Heavy Frequent (%)	AUDIT 8+1 (%)
Northwest Territories	5.4 (3.8 - 6.9)	16.7 (14.2 - 19.3)	31.0 (27.9 - 34.2)	15.8 (13.3 - 18.2)	16.1 (13.6 - 18.6)	15.0 (12.6 - 17.5)	31.9 (28.7 - 35.1)
Yukon	10 N.A.	10 N.A.	31 N.A.	31 N.A.	8 N.A.	10 N.A.	N.A. N.A.
Newfoundland & Labrador	9.5 (7.7 - 11.6)	17.1 (14.6 - 19.8)	34.4 (31.3 - 37.5)	16.5 (14.1 - 19.1)	11.5 (9.5 - 13.7)	11.1 (9.2 - 13.4)	16.9 (14.5 - 19.5)
Nova Scotia	7.1 (5.7 - 9.0)	17.2 (14.9 - 19.9)	40.1 (36.8 - 43.4)	18.3 (15.7 - 21.1)	9.2 (7.8 - 11.8)	8.1 (6.5 - 10.1)	15.8 (13.5 - 18.5)
Quebec	6.2 (4.8 - 7.9)	11.7 (9.7 - 13.9)	39.0 (36.0 - 42.2)	33.8 (30.8 - 36.9)	3.7 (2.7 - 5.0)	5.7 (4.3 - 7.5)	11.9 (10.0 - 14.2)
Ontario	8.3 (4.8 - 7.9)	13.3 (9.7 - 13.9)	37.8 (36.0 - 42.2)	28.3 (30.8 - 36.9)	5.0 (2.7 - 5.0)	7.3 (4.3 - 7.5)	13.7 (11.6 - 16.1)
Saskatchewan	4.7 (3.5 - 6.2)	17.5 (15.2 - 20.0)	43.6 (40.5 - 46.8)	19.5 (17.1 - 22.2)	7.8 (6.3 - 9.7)	6.9 (5.4 - 8.7)	13.8 (11.8 - 16.1)
Alberta	6.5 (5.5 - 7.6)	14.3 (12.9 - 15.9)	40.5 (38.4 - 42.6)	23.4 (21.6 - 25.3)	7.5 (6.5 - 8.7)	7.9 (6.8 - 9.1)	15.3 (13.8 - 16.9)
British Columbia	6.9 (6.0 - 7.9)	14.1 (12.9 - 15.5)	37.9 (36.1 - 39.7)	27.8 (26.1 - 29.5)	6.0 (5.2 - 7.0)	7.3 (6.4 - 8.4)	13.4 (12.1 - 14.7)
Total - Ten Provinces	7.3 (6.5 - 8.1)	13.7 (12.7 - 14.7)	38.7 (37.2 - 40.2)	27.7 (26.3 - 29.2)	5.6 (5.0 - 6.3)	7.1 (6.3 - 7.9)	13.6 (12.6 - 14.6)

Sources: NWT - 2004 NWT Addictions Survey;
Yukon - Yukon Health & Social Services. 2005. Yukon Addictions Survey: Preliminary Results 2005;
Provinces - Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. 2008. Canadian Addiction Survey: Detailed Report
1 Percentage of total population
N.A. - Not available
Definitions
Lifetime abstainer - Never drank alcohol
Former drinker - Drank in the past but not in the 12 months preceding the survey
Light infrequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months less often than once a week and usually fewer than five drinks
Light frequent drinker - Drank in past 12 months once a week or more and usually fewer than five drinks
Heavy infrequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months less often than once a week and usually five or more drinks
Heavy frequent drinker - Drank in the past 12 months once a week or more and usually five or more drinks

As noted in section 2.1, the variables used to derive the AUDIT indicator for the NWT and Canadian surveys are not exactly the same. Since the NWT survey provides a more conservative estimate, the difference between the territory and provinces is likely greater than indicated above.[10]

7.2 Harmful Effects of Alcohol and Drugs

NWT residents were significantly more likely than residents in all other provinces to report at least one harmful effect due to their use of alcohol and drugs. An estimated 22.0% of current drinkers in the territory indicated their drinking had at least one of the following harmful effects in the year preceding the survey: negatively impacted friendships or social life, physical health, home life, or work or studies; contributed to financial, legal or housing problems, or difficulty learning. This proportion was over two times higher than the percentage for any of the provinces. Alberta had the next highest rate at 9.5%. Past-year drug users in the territory were also more likely than their counterparts in the provinces to indicate they experienced at least one of the above adverse effects because of their drug use in the past year (see table 7.2.1).

NWT residents 15 years of age and older were significantly more likely than residents of the other provinces to indicate they had experienced at least one form of harm due to other people's drinking in the year prior to the survey. An estimated 55.7% of residents in this age group reported they had been insulted or humiliated, pushed or shoved, had a serious argument or quarrel, experienced family or marriage problems, or had been verbally abused or physically assaulted in the past year by someone who had been drinking. Alberta (38.0%) and Saskatchewan (35.7%) had the highest rates among the ten provinces.

Table 7.2.1
At Least one Harm Past Year From Own Drinking and Drug Use, and From Others' Drinking, by NWT & Selected Provinces, Population Age 15+, 2004

	Past-Year Harm from Own Drinking Percentage of Current Drinkers	Past-Year Harm from Own Drug Use1 Percentage of Current Users	Past-Year Harm form Others' Drinking Percentage of Total Population
Northwest Territories	22.0 (18.7 - 25.3)	39.2 (30.9 - 47.5)	55.9 (52.6 - 59.3)
Newfoundland & Labrador	7.2 (5.4 - 9.5)	20.3 (13.4 - 29.6)	29.7 (26.7 - 32.9)
Nova Scotia	8.7 (6.7 - 11.1)	19.9 (13.7 - 27.9)	32.1 (28.9 - 35.4)
Quebec	8.4 (6.6 - 10.6)	21.6 (15.8 - 28.7)	30.2 (27.3 - 33.3)
Ontario	9.1 (7.1 - 11.5)	12.9 (7.9 - 20.2)	31.8 (28.8 - 35.0)
Saskatchewan	8.9 (7.1 - 11.1)	24.4 (17.6 - 33.0)	35.7 (32.7 - 38.9)
Alberta	9.5 (8.2 - 11.0)	18.4 (14.7 - 22.9)	38.0 (35.9 - 40.1)
British Columbia	9.1 (7.9 - 10.4)	17.6 (14.4 - 21.3)	35.4 (33.6 - 37.3)
Total - Ten Provinces	8.8 (7.9 - 9.9)	17.5 (14.8 - 20.5)	32.7 (31.3 - 34.2)

Sources: 2004 NWT Addictions Survey & Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. 2005. Canadian Addiction Survey: Detailed Report
1 Drugs include: cannabis, cocaine or crack, speed, ecstasy, hallucinogens, heroin, inhalants, and steroids.

10 The definition of heavy drinking used in the NWT Addiction Survey is more conservative than the one used in the Canadian Addiction Survey. In the latter, women were asked how often they consumed four or more drinks on one occasion.

8 Concluding Remarks

According to data from the *2004 NWT Addiction Survey*, nearly half of current drinkers or 36% of the total population 15 years of age and older drink heavily at least once a month. A similar proportion engages in hazardous or high-risk drinking. This type of drinking behaviour was more common among males, younger residents and those with lower levels of education. The prevalence of heavy alcohol consumption and high-risk drinking is significantly higher in the NWT than in any Canadian province.

Drinking heavily can lead to a large number of negative health, social and public safety consequences. Some of these adverse effects were also noted in the report. About one in four current drinkers in the NWT reported experiencing at least one harmful effect due to their own drinking in the year preceding the survey. Meanwhile, over half of the total population 15 years of age and older indicated they had experienced adverse consequences as a result of other people's drinking. Again, it appears that NWT residents were more likely than residents of other provinces to experience harm from drinking.

An estimated 20.7% of NWT residents 15 years of age and older indicated they used cannabis in the year preceding the survey. Prevalence was higher among males and residents between 15 and 24 years of age. Past year cannabis use was also higher in the NWT than in any province. Meanwhile, 2.7% of residents reported the use of at least one of the following five illicit drugs in the year preceding the survey: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy or heroin. This prevalence rate was similar to those noted in other provinces. An estimated 39% of individuals who reported using cannabis or at least one of the five illicit drugs listed above in the past year indicated they experienced harm from their own drug use in the year preceding the survey.

However, general household surveys such as the NWT Addiction Survey may underestimate the use of these types of illicit drugs. People may be unwilling to report using cocaine or heroin. Moreover, individuals addicted to these types of illicit drugs may be less likely to participate or be sampled in this type of survey. Nonetheless, surveys such as the NWT Addiction Survey form an important part of surveillance efforts needed to track the alcohol and drug situation in the NWT.